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*Non tu corpus eras sine pectore.*—

HOR.



GOOD-NATURE is to the mind, what beauty is to the body; and an agreeable disposition creates a love and esteem for us in the rest of mankind, as an handsome person recommends us to the good graces of the fair-sex. To say the truth, any little defect in point of figure is sooner overlooked than a sourness in the temper; and we conceive a more lasting disgust at a morose churlishness of manners than at a hump-back or a pair of bandy legs. Good-Nature is, indeed, so amiable a qualification, that every man would be thought to possess it: and the ladies themselves would no more like to be accused of a perverse turn of mind than of an unhappy cast of features. Hence it proceeds, that those unfortunate stale virgins, usually call'd Old Maids, have both these heavy censures

VOL. II.

I

thrown

thrown upon them ; and are at once condemned, as ugly and ill-natured.

SOME persons are (according to the strict import of the phrase itself) born Good-Natured. These fortunate people are easy in themselves, and agreeable to all about them. They are, as it were, constitutionally pleasing, and can no more fail of being affable and engaging in conversation, than a *Hamilton* or a *Coventry* can be otherwise than beautiful and charming. Yet it is the duty even of these, who are naturally endowed "with the soft parts of conversation," to be careful not to deprave or abuse them. They must not rely too confidently on their native agreeableness of temper: for we should no more esteem a man, who discovered a negligence of pleasing, than we should admire a beauty, who was an intolerable flatterer. Nor on the other hand, should they let their Good-Nature run to an excess of compliment and extravagant civility: for an engaging temper has been as often spoiled by this troublesome politeness, as a fine shape has been squeezed into frightful distortions by bad stays, and a fine complexion entirely ruined by paint.

BUT if this care is requisite even in those few, who are blest with this native complacency and good humour, how necessary is it for the generality of mankind to labour at rectifying the irregularities in their temper. For this purpose it would be fully sufficient, if they would employ half the art to cultivate their minds, that is daily made use of to set off their persons. To this important end not only the female delicacies of paint and essence are called in as auxiliaries to the embroidered suits and *French* perukes, but this anxiety to supply any personal defect has set the invention of artificers

artificers to work with so much earnestness, that there is scarce any external blemish, which may not be removed or concealed: and however unkindly nature may have dealt with you, you may by their assistance be made a model for a statuary, or a pattern for a painter to study. If you want an inch in height, your shoemaker can supply it, and your hofier can furnish you with a pair of calves that may put an *Irishman* to the blush. An irregularity in your shape can be made invisible by your taylor, or at least by the artist near the *Hay-market*, who daily gives notice, that he makes steel stays for all those who are *INCLINED to be crooked*. There are various compounds and cosmetics that will cure spots and freckles in the complexion, and combs and ointments that will change red hair to the finest brown. Do you want an eye? *Taylor* will fill the vacant socket with as bright a piercer as the family of the *Pentweazles* can boast: or is your mouth *deficient* for want of teeth, *Paul Jullion* (to use his own phrase) will *rectify your head*, and fix a set in your gums as even and beautiful as ever adorned the mouth of a chimney-sweeper. These and many other inventions as curious and extraordinary have been devised; and there are no operations, however painful, which have not been submitted to with patience to conquer personal deformities. I know a gentleman who went through the agony of having his leg broke a second time, because it had been set awry; and I remember a lady, who died of a cancer in her breast, occasioned by the application of repelling plaisters to keep back her milk, that the beauty of her neck might not be destroyed. I most heartily wish the same resolution was discovered in improving the disposition. Half the care that is taken of the body would have happy effects upon the temper.

temper. *Tully* in that part of his *Offices*, where he speaks of Grace, tells us, "that it is destroyed by any violent perturbations either of the body or mind." It is a pity that mankind cannot be reconciled to this opinion; since it is likely, they would spare no pains in cultivating their minds if it tended to adorn their persons. Yet it is certain that a man makes a worse figure with an ignorant pate than an unpowdered peruke, and that knowledge is a greater ornament to the head than a bag or a smart cocked hat; that anger sets like a blood-shot in the eyes, while good-nature lights them up with smiles, and makes every feature in the face charming and agreeable. There is a certain sweetness of disposition, which is sure to procure to those who possess it the good-will of their acquaintance; but it is as ridiculous for a man to hope to be beloved, while he neglects to be amiable, as it would be in a lady, who expects a multitude of admirers, to appear always in a dirty dishabille.

THE difficulty of being convinced that we want this social turn, is the grand reason that so little pains are taken to acquire and perfect it. Would a man once be persuaded of any irregularity in his temper, he would find the blemishes of the mind more easily corrected and amended than the defects and deformities of the body; but alas! every man is in his own opinion sensible and good-humour'd. It is, indeed, possible to convince us, that we have a bad complexion or an awkward deportment, which we endeavour to amend by washes and a dancing-master; but when the mind is in fault, self-adulation, the most fatal species of flattery, makes us cajole ourselves into a belief, that the fault is not in our own disposition, but in that of our companions: as the mad inhabitants

inhabitants of *Moor-fields* conclude all, that come to visit them, out of their senses. A whimsical person complains of the perverseness of his acquaintance, and constantly accuses them of fancy and caprice: and there never was an instance of a positive untoward man, that did not continually rail at the stubbornness and obstinacy of the rest of the world. A modern Buck damns you for a sullen fellow, if you refuse a pint bumper, and looks upon you as a sneaking scoundrel if you decline entering into any of his wild pranks; and do not chuse to lay all night in the round-house. It was the saying of an old philosopher, that "the eye sees not itself:" but when this blind partiality is carried so far, as to make us think those guilty of the folly who make us sensible of it, it is surely as absurd as to imagine, that the hair-lip or carbuncled nose, a man sees in the glass, belongs to the figure in the mirror, and not to his own face. This foolish flattery it is, that makes us think ourselves inflexibly right, while we are obstinately wrong, and prevents our receiving or communicating any pleasure in society. The untractable humourist, while he disgusts all that are about him, conceives himself to be the person affronted, and laments that there is no harmony in the conversation, though he is himself the only one out of tune.

PERFECTION is no more to be expected in the minds of men than in their persons: Natural defects and irregularities in both must be overlooked and excused. All I desire at present is, that they would endeavour with equal earnestness to cultivate their minds, as they do to adorn their persons. To this end we should examine ourselves impartially, and not erect ourselves into judges, and treat all the rest of mankind like criminals. Would it not be mighty ridiculous in



a person of quality to go to court in a ruff, a cloak, a pair of trunk breeches, and the habit worn in the days of *Queen Elizabeth*, and while he strutted about in this antiquated garb, to accuse all the rest of the world of being out of the fashion? As we are composed of a body and mind, equal attention should be paid to both; and we should not be anxious to cloath the person, and at the same time let the mind go naked. We should be equally assiduous to obtain knowledge and virtue as to put on lace and velvet: and when our minds are completely dressed, we should take care that good-nature and complacency influence and direct the whole; which will throw the same grace over our virtues and good qualities, as fine cloaths receive from being cut according to the fashion.

I CANNOT conclude better than with a passage from *Swift's Tale of a Tub*, where the strict analogy between the cloathing of the mind and the body is humourously pointed out. "Man (says he) is a *Micro-coat*. As to his body there " can be no doubt; but examine even the acquirements of " his mind, you will find them all contribute in their order " towards furnishing out an exact dress. To instance no " more; is not *religion* a cloak, *honesty* a pair of shoes " worn out in the dirt, *self-love* a furtout, *vanity* a shirt, " and *conscience* a pair of breeches, which though a cover " for lewdness as well as nastiness, is easily slipped down for " the service of both."

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